

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD,
CANTON COAL PIER
Clinton Street at Keith Avenue
Canton area
Baltimore City
Maryland

HAER NO. MD-34

HAER
MD.
4-BALT,
144-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20240

HAER MD, 4-BALT, 144-
HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
SITE DATA FORM

STATE	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY
MARYLAND	BALTIMORE	CANTON AREA OF BALTIMORE CITY
HISTORIC NAME		HAER NO.
PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD, CANTON COAL PIER		MD-34
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES		

COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL AREAS)

Clinton Street at Keith Avenue, east side of the Northwest Harbor, Canton

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, BUILDER, OR FABRICATOR

1916-1917. Entire equipment of pier was built by Mead-Morrison Mfg. Co., Chicago, Ill.
It was installed under the direction of P.R.R. Chief Engineer, A.C. Shand.

SIGNIFICANCE (TECHNOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE)

The P.R.R. Canton Coal Pier is significant uniquely designed and highly successful means of transporting coal from rail to barge. It is virtually unchanged and still in operation. (see attached)

STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)

Steel superstructure

SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE

cable drawn dump cars on a narrow gauge track, 100 ton hopper,

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE MECHANICAL SYSTEMS, MACHINERY OR EQUIPMENT)

cable propelled "barney" to push loaded cars up to car dumper, interior workings of head house

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES

PRESENT CONDITION AND USE

Good. Still in operation as a coal pier and unloader/loader

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SOCIETY LANDMARK DESIGNATIONS, ETC.)

Robert M. Vogel, ed. "Some Industrial Archeology of the Monumental City & Environs; the physical Presence of Baltimore's Engineering & Industrial History. Society for Industrial Archeology, April, 1975, pg. 19.

COMPILER, AFFILIATION

DATE

C. Crawford, Historian HABS/HAER

March 2, 1988

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD,
CANTON COAL PIER
HAER NO. MD-34 (page 2)

The function of the Pennsylvania Railroad Canton Coal Pier is to carry the coal from railroad cars out to the pier with the use of four-ton cable drawn dump cars which transfer the coal into the ship via one of three traveling loaders. Thus, the plant is comprised of four distinct elements: (1) a gravity, cable haul system for getting the loaded cars to (2) a car dumper with storage hoppers, (3) the cable car system and (4) the traveling loaders.

The process begins in the "load yard" to the east of the pier. The railroad hopper or "road" cars are loaded and one at a time run down to the foot of the incline. A cable propelled "barney" then pushes them up to the car dumper. The 100 ton hopper under the car dumper automatically gravity feeds into the cable cars which travel on an endless, reversing track. The cars are hauled up a 6.72% grade to the steel superstructure on the pier where the coal is delivered to one of the three traveling loaders. The loaders move along the pier on a two-rail track, carrying a hopper and a chute for emptying the coal onto the barges. The emptied cars then move, by the force of gravity, to the "empty yard". The emptying of the dump cars is centrally controlled from a headhouse at the top of the incline. From here, the operator determines which car will dump into which loader, etc.

The pier, built in 1916-1917 has undergone very little change in either its structure or method of operation. Storage bunkers at the end of the pier have been removed, and the discharge ends of the loader chutes have been fitted with "trimmers" for distributing the coal over the barge. The wooden bodies of the dump cars have been rebuilt of sheet metal and their friction journals replaced by roller bearings.

The coal pier has been well maintained and is still in operation. Large amounts of coal are loaded from here and transported down harbor to the nearby, Sparrow's Point plant of Bethlehem Steel.